

CONTROL NO. 72-5055/

CROSS REF: _____

PRIOR PAPERS ON THIS SUBJECT: NO YES

PRIOR CORRES SENT TO: _____

OTHER COMMENTS: _____

EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE NO: B227

+L205
CROSS REF: _____

MEMORANDUM FOR:

H/632

OLEA

1600, 19 May

Date

SECRET

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

Executive Registry

82-5005/2

19 May 1982

Mr. Robert R. Simmons
Staff Director
Select Committee on Intelligence
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Rob:

Reference to your letter of 17 May, attached are my responses keyed to enclosures 1 and 2 respectively. If you need further information, please call.

You can discern from my responses that when it came to events such as those involving the [redacted] I have gratefully led a sheltered life.

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Also enclosed are the citations associated with my awards as well as a detailed chronology and job description of my assignments.

Sincerely,

John N. McMahon

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Enc.

Unclassified when
separated from attachments

SECRETL205
XF 8227

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The United States of America



Central Intelligence Agency

Citation

MR. JOHN N. McMAHON

is hereby awarded the

DISTINGUISHED INTELLIGENCE MEDAL

for his outstanding services to the Central Intelligence Agency from January 1978 to January 1981. A rare and uncommonly resourceful official, he has provided to the Director and Deputy Director of Central Intelligence invaluable advice in developing and implementing operational activities of vital concern to the highest levels of the United States Government. An exceptionally talented and enlightened manager, Mr. McMahon has achieved dramatic improvements in the personnel management system of the Operations Directorate that have been of great benefit to those associated with that vital element of the CIA. A tower of strength in the last three years in redirecting and guiding the operations of his Directorate, he also played a major role in maintaining the cohesiveness that is essential to the overall goals of the Agency. Dynamic and energetic, Mr. McMahon typifies the finest in Agency leadership and his contributions have been of immeasurable value to the national security of the United States, reflecting great credit on him, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal service.

Extract from NFIB Minutes [NFIB-M-32]

Admiral Turner announced his appointment of John McMahon as CIA's Deputy Director for Operations. He asked NFIB to concur in his recommendation to award John McMahon the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal for his fine work as Associate Deputy and Acting Deputy to the DCI for the Intelligence Community. The NFIB concurred unanimously.

HONOR AND MERIT AWARDS CEREMONY

Monday, 14 April 1975

12 Noon

Presentation by Mr. William E. Colby
Director of Central Intelligence

DISTINGUISHED INTELLIGENCE MEDAL

to

Mr. John N. McMahon

DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL - MR. JANNEY: It is our privilege today to honor Mr. John N. McMahon for his outstanding service to the Central Intelligence Agency. The Director of Central Intelligence, Mr. Colby, will present the Distinguished Intelligence Medal.

Would you step forward please, Mr. McMahon.

Citation: Mr. John N. McMahon is hereby awarded the Distinguished Intelligence Medal in recognition of his outstanding service to the Central Intelligence Agency. During the period September 1970 to August 1974 Mr. McMahon served as Deputy Director and Director of ELINT and as Director of Technical Service. In these very senior positions in the Directorate of Science and Technology, his dynamic leadership, foresight and executive ability were instrumental in the success and operational effectiveness of projects of vital importance to the national security of the United States. Mr. McMahon's dedication and accomplishments in the service of his country reflect the highest credit on him, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal service.

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE: I am delighted to say that we are not giving this medal on the occasion of a retirement, which reflects a rather deliberate position we've taken that we like to award these kinds of medals at the time of, or as near to it as possible, the event that justifies it. And

certainly John has done a lot of things which have entitled him to this medal. He did receive an Intelligence Medal of Merit about five years ago for some of his work in a previous job, but the additional responsibilities and the way he has conducted himself over the past five years have clearly warranted this additional medal.

If you look with some curiosity through John's background to see just what the key is that leads to a successful performance of this nature, you see him graduating from Holy Cross with a degree in English and philosophy, which sort of makes you wonder a little bit. Then you find him coming to work in CIA as a GS-5 [redacted] and you sort of wonder, well, oh, that's fine. Then he served in Europe for five years. He served in almost every Directorate including the DD/S&T before it was even named DD/S&T - DDR, the DDP and of course the DDA, or MGS, whatever title it happened to have at any one time. But he has served us well and in some of the most technical jobs we can imagine where he used that firm technical base he had established. But you finally end up with the key indicator, which is his mobility and his ability to handle tough problems that he didn't know much about maybe when he walked into them; but he studied it, understood not only how to run the operation itself but how to be imaginative about where it should go in the future, how to get along with the people involved. He was a personnel officer for awhile. He has that understanding of motivation, what makes people turn out the best work they can. He also has served us for awhile as a budget analyst, so that he knows where the dollars are and how they have to be watched and managed and directed. And he has put all of these qualities together - his technical excellence, his English and philosophy and his ability to articulate things and get them across.

So I think all of these qualities together show the kind of performance that can jump from managing ELINT to managing Technical Services to being our Associate Deputy for Administration generally and can be summed up as this is a very all-around competent fellow who can put all these problems together and come out with good solid solutions and maintain good morale while he's doing it.

I add one thing that I usually do at these events, which is that we don't give the medal to John alone, but his family shares and has a piece of it because we know the kind of dedication and the kind of effort that John has

presented could only have come from a family which has supported him and understood and been an equal contributor to the kind of loyalty and dedication that has been shown here. So the medal very much belongs to the family and we are delighted to have them here to enable us to award this at this time rather than waiting for John's retirement, which I hope is a long way off.

REPORT OF HONOR AND MERIT AWARDS BOARD

Exemption Certificate

DATE

75-4759

12 February 1975

The Honor and Merit Awards Board having considered a recommendation that:

SE	NAME (Last-First-Middle)	BIRTHYEAR	SEX	TYPE EMPLOYEE
	McMAHON, John N.	1929	M	Staff
OFFICE OF ASSIGNMENT	SD	SCHEDULE	GRADE	STATION
O/DDA				

BE AWARDED

Distinguished Intelligence Medal

☐ FOR HEROIC ACTION ON☒ FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE OR ACHIEVEMENT DURING THE PERIOD September 1970 - August 1974☒ RECOMMENDS APPROVAL☐ DOES NOT RECOMMEND APPROVAL☐ RECOMMENDS AWARD OF

UNCLASSIFIED CITATION

Mr. John N. McMahon is hereby awarded the Distinguished Intelligence Medal in recognition of his outstanding service to the Central Intelligence Agency. During the period September 1970 to August 1974 Mr. McMahon served as Deputy Director and Director of ELINT and as Director of Technical Service. In these very senior positions in the Directorate of Science and Technology, his dynamic leadership, foresight and executive ability were instrumental in the success and operational effectiveness of projects of vital importance to the national security of the United States. Mr. McMahon's dedication and accomplishments in the service of his country reflect the highest credit on him, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal service.

REMARKS

(Recommendation approved by DD/S&T on 6 February 1975)

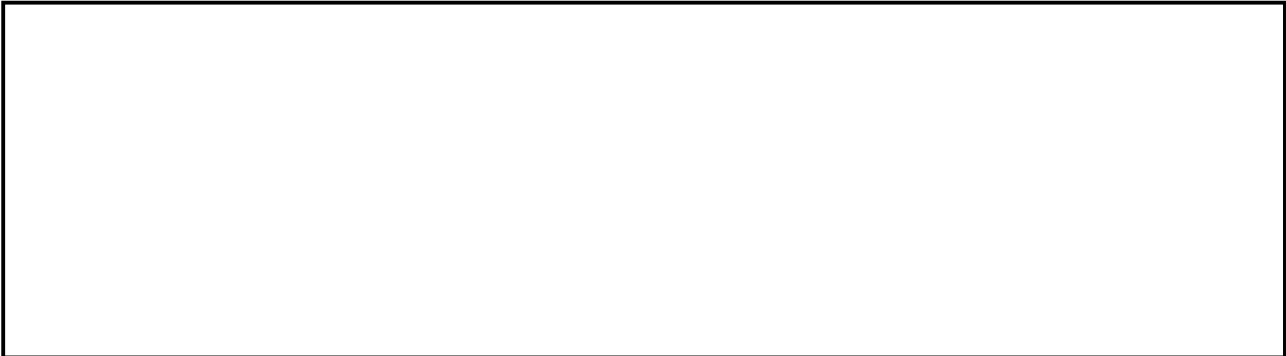
(C O N F I D E N T I A L)

[REDACTED]
11 February 1975

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H O N O R A N D M E R I T A W A R D S B O A R D
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCYMinutes of Meeting Held in
Room 5 E 62, Headquarters, at 1400 Hours
on Tuesday, 11 February 1975

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1. REVIEW OF MINUTES
HMAB-M-366, 28 January 1975

The minutes were approved as written.

2. REVIEW OF CURRENT CASES

The Board agreed to recommend that the individuals named below receive the awards shown.

A. Mr. John N. McMahon, [REDACTED] ADD/A, Distinguished Intelligence Medal. It was the opinion of the Board that Mr. McMahon's achievements fully merit award of the DIM but specifically for the period September 1970 to August 1974 when he served as Deputy Director and Director of ELINT and as Director of Technical Service. The recommendation as submitted covered the period September 1965 to August 1974. It was the consensus of the Board that since Mr. McMahon had been awarded the Intelligence Medal of Merit in recognition of his outstanding performance as Deputy Director of Special Projects from September 1965 to September 1970 that this period of service not be a factor in the award of the DIM. The Board therefore recommended that the citation cover only the period September 1970 to August 1974.

STAT

B. [REDACTED] GS-15, [REDACTED] DDA/Security,
Career Intelligence Medal (posthumous).

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In recognition of his career contributions to the Agency since September 1947 in a variety of increasingly responsible positions with the Office of Security.

[REDACTED] retired in November 1974.

STAT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

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Mr. John N. McMahon is herein recommended for the Distinguished Intelligence Medal for having distinguished himself through exceptionally meritorious service to the United States while serving as Deputy Director, OSP, Director of ELINT and Director of Technical Service of the Directorate of Science and Technology.

While serving as Deputy Director, OSP, Mr. McMahon devoted much of his time and talents to a major project

The success of this project was due in large measure to his efforts and the project continued to mature and prosper. Even though he was heavily involved in this program, his excellent managerial ability gave him the necessary time to assist with other OSP programs.

In 1970 he was appointed Deputy Director, OEL and subsequently assumed the position of Director, ELINT in 1971. His performance as Deputy Director and Director of ELINT was exemplary in every respect. In this and all previous assignments with DD/S&T, Mr. McMahon's service was characterized by a keen sense of management responsibility, excellent judgement, and a tenacity for accomplishment. An excellent example of his versatility was demonstrated in his handling of the negotiations and briefings

In May 1973, he was appointed Director of Technical Service where he proved once again that he is one of the most capable managers in the Agency. He took charge of an office that is primarily involved in support of overseas operations and without doubt made it a more efficient office. Perhaps more important, personnel assigned to the office were aware that Mr. McMahon would look after their well being and would present the viewpoints of his office in a most forceful manner.

-2-

Mr. McMahon has no formal technical training, but he has assimilated a vast amount of technical knowledge which allowed him to make a major impact on the technological decisions of primary concern to the various offices to which he was assigned.

Mr. McMahon has amply demonstrated his expertise as an executive manager in every aspect of his responsibilities. His entire service during the period covered by this recommendation has been characterized by responsible leadership, outstanding initiative, foresight, and total dedication. I very strongly recommend that Mr. John N. McMahon be awarded the Distinguished Intelligence Medal for his exceptionally meritorious service to the United States while assigned to the Directorate of Science and Technology.

The Honor and Merit Awards Board having considered a recommendation that:

SERIAL OR ID NO.	NAME (Last-First-Middle) McMAHON, John N.	BIRTHYEAR 1929	SEX M	TYPE EMPLOYEE
OFFICE OF ASSIGNMENT DDS&T/OSP	SD	SCHEDULE	GRADE	STATION

BE AWARDED

Intelligence Medal of Merit

☐ FOR HEROIC ACTION ON

☒ FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE OR ACHIEVEMENT DURING THE PERIOD 1965-1970

☒ RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

☐ DOES NOT RECOMMEND APPROVAL

☐ RECOMMENDS AWARD OF

UNCLASSIFIED CITATION

Mr. John N. McMahon is hereby awarded the Intelligence Medal of Merit in recognition of his especially meritorious service as Deputy Director, Office of Special Projects. Over the past five years, Mr. McMahon has played a key role in the development and staffing of the Office of Special Projects and in managing its major technical programs. His initiative and vision, coupled with inexhaustible energy and an unusual ability to get things done, have resulted in unique contributions to the national security and to the attainment of Agency missions. His exceptional performance reflects high credit on him and upholds the highest standards of our service.

(Recommendation approved by DD/S&T on 8 October 1970)

REMARKS

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